

# IANs honors Idaho's Navy heritage

Sen. Craig joins tribute to more than 4,000 U.S. submariners 'still on patrol'



Sen. Larry Craig and Vice Adm. John Grossenbacher converse before the IANS meeting. (IANS photo)

By Keith Arterburn  
IANS photos

More than 170 people celebrated Idaho's long and distinguished heritage of contributing to the U.S. Navy during the **Idaho Section of the American Nuclear Society** dinner meeting April 30 at the Shilo Inn.

Sailors and supporters who served during the past half century gathered to hear retired Vice Adm. **John Grossenbacher** recount a bit of submarine history and outline the current strength and capabilities of America's submarine force. Many of them were an integral part of the Idaho Navy heritage they came to celebrate, having previously trained with the Navy here at the Naval Reactors Facility, where thousands of service men and women learned to safely operate the reactors that power the nation's nuclear submarines, aircraft carriers and other vessels.

Grossenbacher retired in November 2003. Until that time, he served as the first Commander, Naval Submarine Forces, responsible for all U.S. submarine forces. He told the audience about the continuing demand for submarine force services in traditional roles, as well as expanding missions in special warfare and intelligence.

**Sen. Larry Craig** joined the celebration to get the evening started right by leading the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance and assisting in cutting the submarine birthday cake, which honored 104 years of faithful service.

**Hawkbill Base**, a group formed to support submarine Hawkbill (SSN 666) 'Sail in the Sand' at Arco, honored the 65 submarines and more than 4,000 submariners who never returned from patrol in a special ceremony called the "Tolling of the Boats."



Bob Seidelman with model of the USS Hawkbill. Seidelman's uniform still fit – after 50 years. (IANS photo)

The celebration honored many parts of Idaho's Navy heritage, including the **Naval Reactors Facility** on the Site, active-duty sailors, the **Naval Reserve Center** in Pocatello, and a large number of Navy veterans, retirees and civilian supporters.

One Navy veteran, **Bob Seidelman**, donned his "crackjack" uniform for the first time in more than 50 years and it still fit. Other veterans groups attending included the **Fleet Reserve Association** and **American Legion Post #56**, along with Blackfoot Mayor **Scott Reese**, representing the **Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve**. Arco Mayor **Carol Jardine** also was honored.

Retired Senior Chief **Don Hulse**, a Hawkbill Base member, brought his 20-foot model of USS Hawkbill, which was moored outside of the Shilo Inn.

The nautical meal was 'topped off' with Shrimp Newberg and traditional Navy bean soup.

[Idaho Section, American Nuclear Society](#)

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END OF STORY



Vice Adm. Grossenbacher views the USS Hawkbill model on display in the Shilo Inn Convention Center parking lot. (IANS photo)